

AIR POUCH**SECRET**

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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

881.361/10-1751

FROM

ATHENS**571**

DESP. NO.

TO

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

October 17, 1951

DATE

REF

Embassy Despatch 523 of October 5, 1951

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SUBJECT: **Transmitting Comment of British Police Mission on Proposed Clemency Program**

There is enclosed a copy of a letter dated October 16, 1951, from Sir Charles Wickham, in which the chief of the British Police Mission comments on the proposed EPEK-Liberal clemency program. Attached to his comment are the latest statistics on the numbers of leftist prisoners and exiles. The translation of the clemency program itself was transmitted to the Department with the despatch under reference.

It would appear that in general the British Police Mission does not disapprove of the program as it now stands. Its misgivings are mainly concerned with how the program is carried out and by whom it will be administered.

From the statistics supplied by the Police Mission, which are considerably more up to date than those which have been available to the Embassy, it will be seen that prisoners serving sentences of five years or less and thus eligible for immediate release number less than 800 of a total of more than 15,000 leftist prisoners. (The latter figure shows a considerable reduction over a few months ago, probably largely due to the workings of Emergency Law 1504.)

Robert B. Memminger
Robert B. Memminger,
Counselor of Embassy.

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Salonika

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State Dept. declassification & release instructions on file

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(Classification)

-1- Enclosure 1 ATHENS 571 Oct. 17, 1951

**BRITISH POLICE AND PRISONS MISSION
HEADQUARTERS,**

Our Reference MS.71/2.

Athens.

16th October, 1951.

Dear Judd:

Thanks for sending me a copy of the proposed leniency measures. It does not say whether these are limited to cases from 1946 onwards or whether they are to cover all cases back to the 1944 rebellion inclusive. Also there is no mention of those awaiting trial the number being about 850, over 200 of whom are awaiting trial for offences against life, or of the relation which these measures will bear to previous legislation on the subject.

We all agree I think that a reduction in the prison and deportee population is desirable but in their present rather general form it is not easy to judge to what extent the proposals will meet this aim or whether they will be acceptable to the non-communist Greeks as a whole. There is always the risk of an agitation against releases especially of those with long sentences which might frighten Deputies. Much may depend upon the confidence which the individuals appointed to the various Committees will inspire.

The following are some notes on the various headings:

A. Exiled Persons.

- (1)(2) The detention of all these has been under constant review. I think the main condition for release has been that the deportee signs the declaration renouncing communism. So long as this remains I doubt if any considerable number will sign.
- (3) This means that the deportees will have to obtain their own accommodation on the Islands to which they will be sent which is not popular with the inhabitants even if the accommodation is available and, of course, it gives them a wider field for propaganda. It operates up to a point now.

SECRET

-2- Encl. ATHENS 571 Oct 17, 1951

B. Laws Banning Communism.

- (1) Under present conditions the abolition of special Courts Martial is desirable provided that any new cases which may arise will be tried quickly. Delay in the Civil Courts was one of the chief causes of criticism in the past.
- (2) Depends on the modifications.

C. Convicts.

- (1) No comment.
- (2) The number involved is about 900 presuming that the translation should read, "up to five years inclusive". Provided that the Committees are well selected there should be no objection.
- (3) The number involved is about 6,200. This is getting on to more delicate ground and until the procedure is elaborated in greater detail and the relation between the Courts and the Special Committees clarified it is not possible to form any opinion on it. It is not clear whether the review by the Courts is solely to decide on release or to include some lesser mitigation of sentence.
- (4) A necessary safeguard.
- (5) I doubt the desirability of all those released being required to reside in their home town or village where their presence might be resented. It might be better to allow some latitude.
- (6) No objection. Clearly it is impossible to carry out all outstanding death sentences.
- (7) No comment.

D. Loyalty Certificates.

- (1)(2)(3) I think this is desirable. I suspect that the power to issue Certificates has been abused in the past.

E. T.E.A.

There has been a progressive improvement in the conduct of these units since they were formed though there is

-3- Encl. 1 ATHENS 571 Oct 17, 1951

still too much improper use of firearms and carelessness in handling them. T.E.A. have a definite value during a rebellion as they help to satisfy the demands that if the State Forces cannot protect the villages then the inhabitants should be enabled to protect themselves.

It is not possible to have gendarmes in every town and village unless the strength was very much increased, nor is it necessary certainly in peace-time. In the event of war the T.E.A. would have a value as a local Home Guard. As an alternative to abolishment it might be worth consideration to retain the Force under Army control and endeavour to improve its organisation, discipline and control. It should then be non-operational except when called out either in whole or in part. The arms could be withdrawn and stored locally but the men should be required to attend a fixed number of instructional periods each month or quarter. The men should be of the older age groups who would not be required for early mobilization.

Security Corps.

I don't understand this. Looks suspicious?

Yours sincerely,

G. Wickham

SECRET

(Classification)

-4- Encl. 1 ATHENS 571 Oct. 17, 1951

ANALYSIS OF LEFT WING GREEK PRISON POPULATION ON 1.9.51

Category	Death	Life	10 ⁺	5 ⁻	1 ⁻	Up to 1 yr.	Waiting Trial		Totals
			20 Yrs.	10 Yrs.	5 Yrs.		A	B	
RAM									
Men	830	1021	1086	96	15	-	23	10	3,081
Boys	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ELAS									
Women	3	7	16	3	-	-	1	-	30
Girls	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Extra Courts Martial									
Men	1042	3466	3132	879	507	26	172	506	9,730
Boys	3	56	53	20	17	-	3	11	163
Women	120	465	429	166	98	-	3	40	1,321
Girls	7	53	65	15	15	-	1	4	160
Ordinary Courts Martial									
Men	34	117	132	103	138	69	9	67	669
Boys	1	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	7
Women	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	1	5
Girls	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals									
Men	1906	4604	4350	1078	660	95	204	583	13,480
Boys	4	56	53	20	23	-	3	11	170
Women	123	473	447	170	98	-	4	41	1,356
Girls	7	53	65	15	15	-	1	5	161
TOTALS	2040	5186	4915	1283	796	95	212	640	15,167

NOTE: 'A' Awaiting trial for offences against life
 'B' Awaiting trial for other offences.

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